

**PROPOSALS**  
Tender'd to the Consideration of Both  
**HOUSES of PARLIAMENT,**  
For Uniting the  
**Protestant Interest for the Present ; And pre-**  
**venting Divisions for the Future.**

Together with the  
**DECLARATION**  
OF  
**K. CHARLES II.**  
Concerning  
**Ecclesiastical Affairs.**

And some Proposals of  
**TERMS of UNION**  
BETWEEN THE  
**Church of England**  
AND  
**DISSENTERS,**

Long since published  
By the Reverend Dean of *S. Pauls.*

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Humble and Modest

# PROPOSALS

For Uniting the

## Protestant Interest.

**I** Doubt not but every Pious and Sober Protestant of this Nation, cannot but be heartily troubled to observe those passionate Differences and unchristian Dissentions which daily increase among Brethren, who are united in one and the same Doctrine of their Religion, and reformed from the Errors and Superstitions of the Church of Rome : Upon the due Consideration of which, every one who wisheth Peace and Prosperity to the Kingdom he lives in, ought to consider what should be the Occasion of those unhappy and ruinous Divisions we have so long suffered under, and to offer probable means for composing them.

As to their first Rise, I doubt not but they ow their Original to the different manner of the Reformation, and the establishing of the Orders which each Church did think fit and convenient for it self, ( as the Reverend and Pious Mr. Hooker acquaints us ) which were so peremptorily established under that high commanding Form, which rendered them to the People as things everlastingly required by the Law of that Lord of Lords, against whose Statutes there is no Exception to be taken ; by which means it came to pass, that one Church could not but accuse and

Hooker's Preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity, printed anno 1676. p. 44, 45.

condemn another of Disobedience to the Will of Christ, in those things where manifest Difference was between them: Whereas the self-same Orders allowed, but yet established in more wary and suspense manner, as being to stand in Force till God should give the Opportunity of some General Conference what might be best for them afterwards to do; This, I say, had both prevented all occasion of just dislike which others might take, and reserved a greater Liberty unto the Authors themselves of entering into farther Consultation afterwards; which, though never so necessary, they could not easily now admit, without some fear of Derogation from their Credit: And therefore that which once they had done, they became for ever after resolute to maintain.

Now if we consider the shortness of that time wherein our first Reformation continued under Edward the Sixth; and the Persecution in Queen Mary's reign, which forced many Pious and Learned Clergymen of the Church of England, to flee into Foreign Countries (as Zurich, Embden, Basil, Strasburg, Frankford, Geneva, &c.) for the Preservation of their Religion and Lives, where they frequently conversed with those Eminent Divines, who were the great Reformers there; 'tis no Wonder that some of them should return better pleased with their Discipline than their own, especially considering that several of them had intimate Acquaintance and Conversation with one of the Reformers, whom the Reverend Mr. Hooker thought incomparably the wisest Man that ever the French Church did enjoy since the Hour it enjoyed him. In Queen Elizabeth's, King James, and K. Charles the First's Reigns, 'tis well known how our Differences increased, until that unhappy War broke out; by which the Non-conforming Interest prevailed; so that the Presbyterian Discipline was endeavoured to be fixed as the established Form of Government in this Nation; our Universities, Preachers, Writings, Education, &c. were generally modelled thereto; by which means, the greatest number of the trading part of the Kingdom, several of the Gentry, and some few of the Nobility (observing the Precepts and Practices, Lives and Deaths of many of that Clergy to be Pious and Exemplary (joyned with them of this, or the like Perswasion.

Hooker's Preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity, p. 44.



Since which time, it pleasing God to restore King *Charles II.* the Parliament thought it convenient to establish the same Discipline which our first Reformers judged prudential, and that (as the Dissenters do complain) upon stricter Subscription than formerly, not abating or laying aside any of those Ceremonies which have been matters of dispute and contention betwixt them and the Church of *England* ever since our blessed Reformation from Popery and Superstition: Upon which account, many of the Non-conforming Divines laid down their Livings, and the old Controversies began afresh to be revived; and so are like to be continued, until we be either ruined by Popery, or healed by Moderation, which is the only Salve to cure the Churches Wounds, and that admirable Remedy formerly proposed to the wisdom of Superiours by the Reverend Dr. *Stillingfleet*; who having highly commended the prudence and temper of the French Churches in composing their publick Forms of Prayer, that they were so far from inserting any thing controversial into them, that Papists themselves would use them. And saith he, the same temper was used by our Reformers in the composing our Liturgy in reference to the Papists, to whom they had an especial Eye, as being the only Party then appearing; whom they desired to draw into their Communion; by coming as near them as they well and safely could. And certainly those holy Men who did seek by any means to draw in others at such a distance from their Principles as the Papists were, did never intend by what they did for that end, to exclude any truly tender Consciences from their Communion. That which they laid as a Bait for them, was never intended by them as a Hook for those of their own Profession. But the same or greater Reason which made them at that time yield so far to them then, would now have perswaded them to alter and lay aside those things which yield matter of offence to any of the same Profession with themselves now: For surely none will be so uncharitable toward those of his own Profession, as not to think there is as much reason to yield in compliance with them, as with the Papists. And it cannot but be looked upon as a Token of God's severe displeasure against us, if any, though unreasonable Proposals of Peace between us and the Papists, should meet with such entertainment among many, and yet any fair offers of Union and Accommodation among our selves be so coldly embraced and entertained. Thus far our Reverend and Learned

Dr. *Stillingfleet's* *Trinicum*  
P. 122. 123.

ed Dean of *Pauls* delivered his Opinion as to these matters of Dispute near thirty Years a-gone, before the Laws were established against Dissenters. And in his Book, Entituled, *The unreasonableness of Separation*, (wrote twenty years after the former) He hath given the World such a Testimony of his real Kindness to Dissenters, (notwithstanding his hard usage from them) and of his sincere and hearty desire to heal our unhappy Breaches, and unite our unchristian Divisions, as will for ever consecrate his Memory to posterity. Upon these and some other like Considerations, I should humbly propose to the Wisdom of this present Parliament, some probable means to put an end to our present Differences, and to Unite us for the future; that so we may become a flourishing Nation, free from the Factions and Divisions of former Ages.

### *Proposals for our present Uniting.*

I. **I** Humbly propose, that the Ceremonies at present enjoined by Law, might be left to the liberty of the Clergy to use or lay aside, and that, because the Dissenters on the one hand are perswaded that their conformity to them would be sinful; and the Church of *England* on the other hand hath declared at several times that they are things indifferent, and may be changed. Upon our first Reformation in the account she hath given of Ceremonies, why some be abolished, and some retained, She saith thus, That as those Ceremonies were taken away which were most abused, and did burthen Mens Consciences without any cause; so the other that remain are retained for Discipline and Order, which (upon just causes may be altered, and changed. Again, since his Majesties Restauration, in her Preface to the Common-Prayer, are these Words, That the particular Forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used, being things in their own Nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged; it is but reasonable that upon weighty and important Considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes should be made therein, as to those that are in place of Authority, should  
from

from time to time seem either necessary or expedient. Accordingly we find that in the Reigns of several Princes of Blessed Memory since the Reformation, the Church upon just and weighty Considerations her therunto moving, hath yielded to make such Alterations in some some particulars, as in their respective times were thought convenient. Thus far the Church of England. And of late I find that a very eminent Member thereof, the Reverend Dean of Canterbury, hath acquainted us in a publick Sermon Preached by him at the Yorkshire-Feast, That though it was not for private Persons to undertake in matters of publick concernment, yet he thought he had no cause to doubt but the Governours of our Church (notwithstanding all the advantages of Authority and Reason too, as they thought, on their side) were Persons of that Piety and Prudence, that for Peace sake, and in order to a firm Union amongst Protestants, they would be content, if that would do it, not to insist upon little things, but to yield them up, whether to the infirmity or importunity, or, perhaps, in some very few things, to the plausible exceptions of those who differed from them.

Dr. Tillotson's  
Sermon,  
Preached at  
the Yorkshire-  
Feast. An.  
1679. p. 28.

The Reverend Dr. Sherlock, in a Sermon lately preached before the Lord Mayor, hath likewise most charitably and piously declared his Thoughts about these matters of difference in the following Words.

We have reason to hope, that the Church of England, which at the beginning of the Reformation took such prudent Care not to offend the Papists going farther from them, than was necessary; will, whenever it is likely to do good, condescend a great deal farther than it is necessary to reform, to meet the Dissenter; for while the external decency, gravity, and solemnity of Worship is secured; no wise and good Man will think much to change a changeable Ceremony, when it will heal the Breaches and Divisions of the Church. And let us all heartily pray to God that there may be this good and peaceable disposition of Mind in all Conformists, and Non-conformists towards a happy re-union; and all considering Men will think it time to lay aside such little Disputes, when it is not merely the Church of England, nor any particular Sect of Protestants, whose Ruin is aimed at, but the whole Protestant Faith.

Dr. Sherlock's  
Sermon,  
Preached be-  
fore the Lord  
Mayor. Nov.  
1683.

And as a farther Confirmation of the readiness, not only of our Divines, but of the Fathers of our Church to encourage so glorious a Work, His Grace of Canterbury, and the rest

rest of the petitioning Bishops, did in their famous Petition ( for which they were sent Prisoners to the Tower ) assure his Majesty, That they did not refuse to distribute and publish his Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, *from any want of due Tenderneſs to Diſſenters ; in relation to whom they were willing to come to ſuch a Temper, as ſhould be thought fit, when, that Matter ſhould be conſidered and ſettled in Parliament and Convocation.*

And not long after another company of Biſhops who were ſent for by the late King *James*, to give him their Advice, ( in ſeveral important Affairs of the Nation ) among other things, propoſed, *That a Free Parliament ſhould eſtabliſh a due Liberty of Conſcience.*

The Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* was ſo earneſt to promote this ſo Chriſtian Deſign, that among thoſe admirable Articles recommended by his Grace to all the Biſhops within his Province, ( which were to be more fully inſiſted upon in their Addreſſes to the Clergy and People of their reſpective Dioceſſes ) this was one :

*That they alſo walk in Wiſdom towards thoſe that are not of our Communion : And if there be in their Pariſhes any ſuch, that they neglect not frequently to conſer with them in the Spirit of Meekneſs, ſeeking by all good Ways and Means to gain and win them over to our Communion : More eſpecially that they have a very tender Regard to our Brethren the Proteſtant Diſſenters ; that upon occaſion offered, they viſit them at their Houſes, and receive them kindly at their own, and treat them fairly wherever they meet them ; perſwading them ( if it may be ) to a full compliance with our Church, or at leaſt, that whereunto we have already attained, we may all walk by the ſame Rule and mind the ſame thing. And in order hereunto, that they take all Opportunities of Aſſuring and Convincing them, that the Biſhops of this Church are really and ſincerely irreconcilable to the Errors, Superſtitious, Idolatries and Tyrannies of the Church of Rome.*

*And that they warmly and moſt affectionately exhort them, to joyne with us in Daily Fervent Prayer to the God of Peace, for an Universal Bleſſed Union of all the Reformed Churches both at home and abroad, againſt our common Enemies, and that all they who do confeſs the Holy Name of our Dear Lord, and do agree in the Truth of his Holy Word, may alſo meet in one Holy Communion, and live in perfect Unity and Godly Love.*

Now

Now seeing the Church of *England* hath once and again declared her excellent temper and moderation for the preservation of Peace and Unity ( the great end and design of all Church-government ) we have little reason to question her readineſs ( at ſuch a time as this is ) to comply with ſo moſt a Propoſal, as a liberty of uſing or reſuſing thoſe Ceremonies, which ſhe ſaith, *In their own nature are indifferent and alterable, and upon weighty and important conſiderations, may be changed, &c.* or to grant her conſent to ſuch a Subſcription, in relation to thoſe Articles which concern the Government and Diſcipline of the Church, as are propoſed by the Learned Dean of S. Paul's, in the *Appendix*; eſpecially conſidering that by this condeſcention of hers, ſhe will certainly bring into her Communion a great number of pious, moderate, and more conſiderative Non-conformiſts: Which will not only add ſtrength to her ſelf, but give a great joy and content to all thoſe who have wiſh'd well to the Peace, Unity, and proſperity of this our Church and Nation; To which end it would not be amiſs that a ſtrict Injunction ſhould be laid on the Clergy and People to forbear all harſh and unchriſtian Language one towards another, and to obſerve the Apoſtles Rule, *of not judging one another.*

2. I would likewiſe humbly propoſe, That the reſt of the Proteſtant Diſſenters might be indulged by Act of Parliament; provided they neither Preached, wrote, nor diſcourſ'd againſt the Doctrines or Government of the Church as by Law eſtabliſhed; and that, becauſe Charity, which is kind, and thinks no evil, would oblige a ſober and indifferent perſon to believe that the reaſon of their Separation from our Church, did chiefly proceed from a tendereſs of Conſcience ( impreſſed upon them by the force of their Education, Study, Converſation, &c. ) left in complying with the preſent eſtabliſhed Form of Worſhip, they ſhould ſin againſt God, and wound the peace of their own Souls: [for otherwiſe, their own preſent quiet and intereſt muſt neceſſarily have obliged them to a Compliance, they having been under a continual danger and hazard of the execution of the Laws eſtabliſhed againſt them; where- by they have been not only deprived of that Maintenance which by the countenance of Authority they might otherwiſe have expected and publickly enjoyed, but expoſed to many wants, difficulties, and ſufferings.]



*Proposals for preventing future Divisions.*

I humbly propose to the Wisdom of this present Parliament, That an *A C T* might be passed, whereby every person (after a limited term of years) intending to take holy Orders should be incapacitated for any Church-preferment, or for a License to preach in private Congregations; who could not give a satisfactory account to the Bishop of the Diocese where he intended to settle, of his proficiency and ability in Church-History and Primitive Learning, whereby he might be able to give a clear and plain account of what Discipline and Order were used in the Church of God nearest our Saviour's and the Apostles days; when Differences and Errours in Doctrine or Church-government began first to arise; with the Authors, Occasion, and Effects thereof. The Advantages which must necessarily attend the making of such a Law, would be very great both to our interest in Church and State; amongst which I beg leave to name the following.

1. We might hereby (for the future) more assuredly hope for, and expect Peace and Union amongst our Church-Men, who having been all well acquainted with Primitive Learning and practice, with the rise and growth of all Heresies, Schisms, and Divisions in the Church, and with the fatal consequences which have attended them; they would not more rationally than unanimously make choice of one and the same Form of worship and Discipline, but most heartily unite in their affections to one another, endeavouring with all their strength and power to maintain the Church in Peace and Unity.

2. By this means we might be assured to enjoy the most Learned Clergy that ever this Nation brought forth, who would not only prove a great Bulwark against Popery on the one hand, but Schism and Faction on the other; and being so well accomplished for the Ministerial Function (before they enter into it) might much more assuredly engage the affection and hearts of their people, by spending (in private) the greatest part of the Week in instructing them in the Principles, and encouraging them in the Practice of the

the Christian Religion; a Duty, alas, too much neglected in our days!

3. We may then hope for Preferments to answer every man's Merit; One of the principal Reasons why we have more Clergy-men than Livings, seeming to be this, That a great number of ordinary Tradesmen and Farmers do send their Children to the Universities (being ambitious to make them Gentlemen) though they are unable to maintain them there above three or four Years; in which time such Accomplishments are not to be attained as are required by this Proposal; If therefore such a Law (as this) were once established, they would be willing to bring them up to honest Professions and Trades, much more suitable for them; and Persons of better Estate and Quality would be encouraged to bring up their Children in the Universities, and continue them there until they arrived to that pitch of Learning, which would not only render them the Honour of their own, but the Envy of Foreign Nations, and also capacitate them for the enjoyment of a Preferment suitable to their Parents Charge, and their own Pains and Industry; especially if the King would appropriate the First-Fruits and Tenths of all Ecclesiastical Preferments; or the Parliament should think fit to raise a sum of Money for the purchasing Improvements, and endowing Livings with such a competency as might enable the Incumbents to provide comfortably for themselves and Families, and to keep up decent Hospitality in their Neighbourhood, and would annex those Improvements (when purchased) to the Bishops and Chapters of each Diocese, who are to be presumed to be the most competent Judges of the Abilities of all Persons to be entrusted with the care of Souls: And for the more effectual Success of this important Affair, let the Bishops be obliged every Year to call upon the Universities for the Names of the most Pious, Learned and Industrious Persons in their several Colleges.

In short, I heartily wish that we might often and seriously remember our blessed Saviours Prediction, that *a Kingdom divided against it self, cannot stand*; and likewise consider that fate which attended the Faction and Division of the *Jews*; which grew to that height, that they could not forbear destroying each other, even when their declared Enemies the *Romans* were coming to besiege their City. From which, good Lord deliver us.



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# A P P E N D I X.

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*His Majesty's Declaration to all His loving Subjects of  
His Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales,  
concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs.*

C H A R L E S R.

**H**OW much the Peace of the State is concerned in the Peace of the Church, and how difficult a thing it is to preserve Order and Government in Civil, whilst there is no Order or Government in Ecclesiastical Affairs, is evident to the World; and this little part of the World, Our own Dominions, hath had so late experience of it, that we may very well acquiesce in the Conclusion, without enlarging Our self in Discourse upon it, it being a Subject We have had frequent occasion to contemplate upon, and to lament, abroad as well as at Home.

In Our Letter to the *Speaker* of the House of Commons from *Breda*, We declared how much We desired the Advancement and Propagation of the Protestant Religion; That neither the unkindness of those of the same Faith towards Us, nor the Civilities and Obligations from those of a contrary Profession ( of both which We have had abundant evidence) could in the least degree startle Us, or make Us swerve from it, and that nothing can be proposed to manifest Our Zeal and Affection for it, to which we will not readily consent; And We said then, that We did hope in due time, Our self to propose somewhat for the Propagation of it, that will satisfy the World, that We have always made it both Our Care and Our Study, and have enough observed what is most like to bring Disadvantage to it. And the truth is, We do think Our Self the more competent to propose, and with God's Assistance

stance to determine many things now in difference, from the time We have spent, and the experience We have had in most of the Reformed Churches abroad, in *France*, in the *Low-Countries*, and in *Germany*, where We have had frequent Conferences, with the most learned Men, who have unanimously lamented the great Reproach the Protestant Religion undergoes from the distempers and too notorious Schisms in matters of Religion in *England*: And as the most learned among them have always with great Submission and Reverence acknowledged and magnified the established Government of the Church of *England*, and the great Countenance and Shelter the Protestant Religion received from it, before these unhappy times; So many of them have with great Ingenuity and Sorrow confessed, that they were too easily misled by mis-information and prejudice into some dis-esteem of it, as if it had too much complied with the Church of *Rome*; whereas they now acknowledg it to be the best Fence God hath yet raised against Popery in the World; And We are perswaded they do with great Zeal wish it restored to its old Dignity and Veneration.

When We were in *Holland*, We were attended by many grave and learned Ministers from hence, who were looked upon as the most able and principal Assertors of the Presbyterian Opinions, with whom We had as much Conference as the multitude of Affairs which were then upon Us would permit Us to have; and to Our great Satisfaction and Comfort found them Persons full of Affection to Us, of Zeal for the Peace of the Church and State, and neither Enemies (as they have been given out to be) to Episcopacy or Liturgy, but modestly to desire such Alterations in either, as without shaking Foundations, might best allay the present Distempers, which the Indisposition of the time, and the tenderness of some mens Consciences had contracted; For the better doing whereof, We did intend, upon Our first arrival in this Kingdom to call a Synod of Divines, as the most proper expedient to provide a proper Remedy for all those Differences and dissatisfactions which had, or should arise in matters of Religion; and in the mean time, We published in Our Declaration from *Breda* a Liberty to tender Consciences, and that no Man should be disquieted or called in question for differences of Opinion in matter of Religion,

ligion, which do not disturb the Peace of the Kingdom, and that We shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to Us, for the full granting that Indulgence.

Whilst We continued in this temper of mind and Resolution, and have so far complied with the perswasion of particular Persons, and the distemper of the time, as to be contented with the exercise of Our Religion in Our own Chapel, according to the constant practice and Laws established, without enjoying that practice, and the observation of those Laws in the Churches of the Kingdom; in which We have undergone the Censure of many, as if we were without that Zeal for the Church which We ought to have, and which by God's grace, We shall always retain; We have found Our Self not so candidly dealt with as We have deserved, and that there are unquiet and restless Spirits, who without abating any of their own distemper in recompence of the Moderation they find in Us, continue their bitterness against the Church, and endeavour to raise Jealousies of Us, and to lessen Our Reputation by their Reproaches, as if We were not true to the Professions VVe have made: And in order thereunto, they have very unseasonably caused to be Printed, Published, and Dispersed throughout the Kingdom a Declaration heretofore Printed in Our Name during the time of Our being in *Scotland*, of which We shall say no more than that the Circumstances by which We were enforced to sign that Declaration, are enough known to the World; And that the worthiest and greatest part of that Nation did even then detest and abhor the ill usage of Us in that Particular, when the same Tyranny was exercised there by the Power of a few ill Men, which at that time had spread it self over this Kingdom, and therefore We had no reason to expect that We should at this Season, when We are doing all We can to wipe out the Memory of all that hath been done amiss by other Men, and, We thank God, have wiped it out of Our own remembrance, have been Our Self assaulted with those Reproaches; which We will likewise forget.

Since the Printing this Declaration, several seditious Pamphlets and *Quaries* have been published and scattered abroad, to infuse Dislike and Jealousies into the Hearts of the People, and

and of the Army, and some who ought rather to have repented the former Mischiefs they have wrought, than to have endeavoured to improve it, have had the hardness to publish, that the Doctrine of the Church, against which, no Man with whom We have conferred hath excepted, ought to be reformed as well as the Discipline.

This over-passionate and turbulent way of proceeding, and the Impatience We find in many for some speedy determination in these matters, whereby the Minds of Men may be Compos'd, and the Peace of the Church establish'd, hath prevail'd with Us to invert the method We had propos'd to Our Self, and even in order to the better calling and composing of a Synod (which the present Jealousies will hardly agree upon) by the assistance of God's blessed Spirit, which We daily invoke and supplicate, to give some determination Our Self to the matters in difference, until such a Synod may be call'd, as may without Passion or Prejudice, give us such farther assistance towards a perfect union of Affections, as well as submission to Authority, as is necessary: And We are the rather induc'd to take this upon Us, by finding upon the full Conference We have had with the learned Men of several Perswasions, that the Mischiefs, under which both the Church and State do at present suffer, do not result from any form'd Doctrine or Conclusion which either Party maintains or avows, but from the Passion and Appetite, and Interest of particular Persons, who contract greater prejudice to each other, from those Affections, than would naturally rise from their Opinions; and those distempers must be in some degree allay'd, before the meeting in a Synod can be attended with better success, than their meeting in other places, and their discourses in Pulpits have hitherto been; and till all thoughts of Victory are laid aside, the humble and necessary thoughts for the Vindication of Truth cannot be enough entertain'd.

We must for the honour of all those of either persuasion with whom We have conferred, declare That the Professions and Desires of all for the advancement of Piety and true Godliness, are the same; their professions of Zeal for the Peace of the Church, the same; of Affection and Duty to Us, the same; They all approve Episcopacy; They all approve a set form of Liturgy; and they all disprove and dislike the sin of Sacrilege, and the alienation of the Reve-

nue of the Church ; And if upon these excellent Foundations, in submission to which there is such a harmony of Affections, any Superstructures should be raised, to the shaking those Foundations, and to the contracting and lessening the blessed gift of Charity, which is a vital part of Christian Religion, We shall think Our Self very unfortunate, and even suspect that We are defective in that administration of Government, with which God hath entrusted Us.

We need not profess the high Affection and Esteem we have for the Church of *England* as it is established by Law ; the Reverence to which hath supported us with Gods Blessing, against many temptations ; nor do We think that Reverence in the least degree diminished by Our Condescensions, nor peremptorily insist on some particulars of Ceremony, which, however introduced by the Piety and Devotion, and Order of former times, may not be so agreeable to the present, but may even lessen that Piety and Devotion, for the improvement whereof they might happily be first introduced, and consequently may well be dispensed with ; and We hope this charitable compliance of Ours will dispose the Minds of all Men to a cheerful submission to that Authority, the preservation whereof is so necessary for the Unity and Peace of the Church ; and that they will acknowledge the support of the Episcopal Authority, to be the best support of Religion, by being the best means to contain the Minds of Men within the Rules of Government : And they who would restrain the exercise of that holy Function within the Rules which were observed in the Primitive times, must remember and consider, that the Ecclesiastical Power being in those blessed times always subordinate and subject to the Civil ; it was likewise proportioned to such an extent of Jurisdiction as was most agreeable to that ; And as the Sanctity and Simplicity, and Resignation of that Age, did then refer many things to the Bishops, which the policy of succeeding Ages would not admit, at least did otherwise provide for ; so it can be no reproach to Primitive Episcopacy, if where there have been great alterations in the Civil Government, from what was then, there have been likewise some difference and alteration in the Ecclesiastical, the Essence and Foundation being still preserved. And upon this ground, without taking upon Us to censure the Government of the Church



Church in other Countries, where the Government of the State is different from what it is here, or enlarging Our Self upon the Reasons why, whilst there was an Imagination of erecting a Democratical Government here in the State, they should be willing to continue an Aristocratical Government in the Church; It shall suffice to say, that since by the wonderful Blessing of God, the Hearts of this whole Nation are returned to an obedience to Monarchick Government in the State, it must be very reasonable to support that Government in the Church which is established by Law, and with which the Monarchy hath flourished through so many Ages, and which is in truth as ancient in this Island as the Christian Monarchy thereof; and which hath always in some respects or degrees been enlarged or restrained, as hath been thought most conducing to the Peace and Happiness of the Kingdom; and therefore We have not the least doubt but that the present Bishops will think the present Concessions now made by Us to allay the present Distempers, very just and reasonable, and will very chearfully conform themselves thereunto.

1. We do in the first place Declare Our purpose and Resolution is and shall be, to promote the Power of Godliness, to encourage the exercises of Religion, both publick and private, and to take care that the Lord's Day be applied to holy Exercises, without unnecessary divertisments; and that insufficient, negligent, and scandalous Ministers be not permitted in the Church; And that as the present Bishops are known to be Men of great and exemplar Piety in their Lives, which they have manifested in their notorious and unexampled Sufferings during these late Distempers; and of great and known sufficiency of Learning; so We shall take special Care, by the assistance of God, to prefer no Men to that Office and Charge, but Men of Learning, Vertue, and Piety, who may be themselves the best examples to those who are to be Governed by them; And We shall expect, and provide the best We can, that the Bishops be frequent Preachers, and that they do very often Preach themselves in some Church of their Diocess, except they be hindred by Sicknes, or other bodily Infirmities, or some other justifiable occasion, which shall not be thought justifiable if it be requent.

2. Because the Diocesses, especially some of them, are thought to be of too large extent : We will appoint such a Number of Suffragan Bishops in every Diocess as shall be sufficient for the due performance of their work.

3. No Bishop shall Ordain, or exercise any part of Jurisdiction which appertains to the Censures of the Church, without the advice and assistance of the Presbyters ; And no Chancellors, Commissaries, or Officials, as such, shall exercise any Act of Spiritual Jurisdiction in these cases (*viz.*) Excommunication, Absolution, or wherein any of the Ministry are concerned, with reference to their Pastoral charge. However Our intent and meaning is to uphold and maintain the Profession of the Civil Law so far and in such matters as it hath been of use and practice within Our Kingdoms and Dominions ; Albeit as to Excommunication, Our Will and Pleasure is, that no Chancellor, Commissary, or Official shall Decree any Sentence of Excommunication or Absolution, or be Judges in those things wherein any of the Ministry are concerned, as is aforesaid. Nor shall the Arch-Deacon exercise any Jurisdiction without the advice and assistance of six Ministers of his Arch-Deaconry, whereof three to be nominated by the Bishop, and three by the election of the major part of the Presbyters within the Arch-Deaconry.

4. To the end that the Deans and Chapters may be the better fitted to afford Counsel and Assistance to the Bishops, both in Ordination and the other Offices mentioned before ; We will take care that those Preferments be given to the most Learned and Pious Presbyters of the Diocess ; And moreover that an equal number (to those of the Chapter) of the most learned, pious, and discreet Presbyters of the same Diocess, annually chosen by the major vote of all the Presbyters of that Diocess present at such Elections, shall be always advising and assisting, together with those of the Chapter, in all Ordinations, and in every part of Jurisdiction which appertains to the Censures of the Church, and at all other solemn and important Actions in the exercise of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, wherein any of the Ministry are concerned : Provided that at all such Meetings, the number of the Ministers so elected, and those present of the Chapter shall be equal, and not exceed one the other, and that to make the numbers equal, the Juniors of the exceeding



ing number be withdrawn that the most ancient may take place : nor shall any Suffragan Bishop ordain or exercise the fore-mentioned Offices and acts of Spiritual Jurisdiction, but with the advice and assistance of a sufficient number of the most judicious and pious Presbyters annually chosen as aforesaid within his Precincts : And Our Will is that the great work of Ordination be constantly and solemnly performed by the Bishop and his aforesaid Presbytery, at the four set times and seasons appointed by the Church for that purpose.

5. We will take care that Confirmation be rightly and solemnly performed, by the Information, and with the Consent of the Minister of the place ; who shall admit none to the Lord's Supper, till they have made a credible Profession of their Faith, and promised Obedience to the Will of God ; according as is expressed in the Considerations of the Rubrick before the Catechism ; And that all possible diligence be used for the Instruction and Reformation of scandalous Offenders, whom the Minister shall not suffer to partake of the Lord's Table, until they have openly declared themselves to have truly repented and amended their former naughty Lives, as is partly exprest in the *Rubrick*, and more fully in the *Canons* ; Provided there be place for due Appeals to Superiour Powers. But besides the Suffragans and their Presbytery, every Rural Dean (those Deans, as heretofore, to be nominated by the Bishop of the Diocess) together with three or four Ministers of that Deanery, chosen by the major part of all the Ministers within the same, shall meet once in every Month, to receive such Complaints as shall be presented to them by the Ministers or Church-Wardens of the respective Parishes ; and also to compose all such differences betwixt Party and Party, as shall be referred unto them by way of Arbitration, and to convince Offenders, and reform all such things as they find amiss by their Pastoral Reproofs and Admonitions, if they may be so Reformed : And such Matters as they cannot by this Pastoral and Perswasive way compose and reform, are by them to be prepared for, and presented to the Bishop ; at which Meeting any other Ministers of that Deanery, may, if they please, be present and assist. Moreover, the Rural Dean and his Assistants are in their respective Divisions to see that the Children and younger sort be carefully instructed by the re-

pective Ministers of every Parish, in the Grounds of Christian Religion, and be able to give a good account of their Faith and Knowledge, and also of their Christian Conversation conformable thereunto, before they be confirmed by the Bishop, or admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

6. No Bishop shall exercise any Arbitrary Power, or do or impose any thing upon the Clergy or the People, but what is according to the known Law of the Land.

7. We are very glad to find, that all with whom we have conferred, do in their Judgments approve a Liturgy, or set Form of Publick Worship, to be Lawful; which in Our Judgment, for the preservation of Unity and Uniformity, We conceive to be very necessary: And though we do esteem the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, contained in the Book of Common Prayer, and by Law established, to be the best We have seen; And We believe that We have seen all that are extant and used in this part of the World, and well know what Reverence most of the Reformed Churches, or at least the most Learned Men in those Churches have for it; Yet since We find some exceptions made against several things therein, We will appoint an equal number of Learned Divines of both Perswasions, to re-view the same, and to make such alterations as shall be thought most necessary; and some additional Forms (in the Scripture phrase, as near as may be) suited unto the nature of the several parts of Worship, and that it be left to the Ministers choice to use one or other at his discretion. In the mean time, and till this be done, although We do heartily wish and desire, that the Ministers in their several Churches, because they dislike some Clauses and Expressions, would not totally lay aside the use of the Book of Common Prayer, but read those parts against which there can be no exception; which would be the best instance of declining those marks of Distinction, which We so much labour and desire to remove; Yet in Compassion to divers of Our good Subjects, who scruple the use of it, as now it is, Our Will and Pleasure is, that none be punished or troubled for not using it, until it be reviewed, and effectually Reformed, as aforesaid.

8. Lastly, Concerning Ceremonies, which have administered so much matter of difference and contention, and which have

have been introduced by the Wisdom and Authority of the Church, for edification, and the improvement of Piety : We shall say no more, but that We have the more esteem of all, and Reverence for many of them, by having been present in many of those Churches where they are most abolished, or discountenanced ; And it cannot be doubted, but that, as the Universal Church cannot introduce one Ceremony in the Worship of God, that is contrary to God's Word expressed in the Scripture ; so every National Church, with the Approbation and Consent of the Sovereign Power, may, and hath always introduced such particular Ceremonies, as in that conjuncture of time are thought most proper for edification and the necessary improvement of Piety and Devotion in the People, though the necessary practice thereof cannot be deduced from Scripture ; and that which before was, and in it self is indifferent, ceases to be indifferent, after it is once established by Law : And therefore Our present Consideration and Work is, to gratifie the private Consciences of those who are grieved with the use of some Ceremonies, by indulging to, and dispensing with their omitting those Ceremonies ; not utterly to abolish any which are Established by Law, ( if any are practised contrary to Law, the same shall cease ) which would be unjust, and of ill example ; and to impose upon the Conscience of some, for the satisfaction of the Conscience of others, which is otherwise provided for. As it could not be reasonable that men should expect, that We should Our Self decline, or enjoin others to do so, to receive the Blessed Sacrament upon Our Knees, which in Our Conscience is the most humble, most devout, and most agreeable Posture for that Holy Duty, because some other men, upon reasons best, if not only known to themselves, choose rather to do it sitting or standing : We shall leave all decisions and determinations of that kind, if they shall be thought necessary for a perfect and entire Unity and Uniformity throughout the Nation, to the advice of a National Synod, which shall be duly called, after a little time, and a mutual Conversation between persons of different persuasions, hath mollified those distempers, abated those sharpnesses, and extinguished those jealousies which make men unfit for those Consultations ; And upon such advice, We shall use Our best endeavor that such Laws may be established.

blished, as may best provide for the Peace of the Church and State. Provided that none shall be denied the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, though they do not use the gesture of kneeling in the Act of receiving.

In the mean time, out of Compassion and Compliance towards those who would forbear the Cross in Baptism, We are content that no Man shall be compelled to use the same, or suffer for not doing it: But if any Parent desire to have his Child Christned according to the Form used, and the Minister will not use the Sign, it shall be lawful for that Parent to procure another Minister to do it: And if the proper Minister shall refuse to omit that Ceremony of the Cross, it shall be lawful for the Parent, who would not have his Child so Baptised, to procure another Minister to do it, who will do it according to his desire.

No Man shall be compelled to bow at the Name of J E S U S, or suffer in any degree for not doing it, without reproaching those who out of their Devotion continue that ancient Ceremony of the Church.

For the use of the Surplice, we are contented that all Men be left to their Liberty to do as they shall think fit, without suffering in the least degree for wearing, or not wearing it; Provided, that this liberty do not extend to Our own Chappel, Cathedral, or Collegiate Churches, or to any Colledge in either of Our Universities; but that the several Statutes and Customs for the use thereof in the said places, be there observed as formerly.

And because some Men, otherwise pious and learned, say, They cannot conform unto the Subscription required by the Canon, nor take the Oath of Canonical Obedience; We are content, and it is Our Will and Pleasure, (so they take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy) that they shall receive Ordination, Institution, and Induction, and shall be permitted to exercise their Function, and to enjoy the Profits of their Livings, without the said Subscription or Oath of Canonical Obedience: And moreover, That no Persons in the Universities shall for the want of such Subscription be hindred in the taking of their Degrees. Lastly, That none be judged to forfeit his Presentation or Benefice, or be deprived of it, upon the Statute of the Thirteenth of Queen *Elizabeth*, Chapter the twelfth, so he read and declare  
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his assent to all the Articles of Religion, which only concern the Confession of the true Christian Faith, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments comprised in the Book of Articles in the said Statute mentioned. In a word, We do again renew what we have formerly said in Our Declaration from *Breda*, for the liberty of tender Consciences, that no Man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of Opinion in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the Peace of the Kingdom; and if any have been disturbed in that kind since our arrival here, it hath not proceeded from any direction of Ours.

To conclude, and in this place to explain what We mentioned before, and said in Our Letter to the House of Commons from *Breda*, That We hoped in due time, Our Self to propose somewhat for the Propagation of the Protestant Religion, that will satisfie the World, that We have always made it both Our Care and Our Study, and have enough observed what is most like to bring disadvantage to it: We do conjure all Our Loving Subjects to acquiesce in, and submit this Our Declaration concerning those differences which have so much disquieted the Nation at home, and given such offence to the Protestant Churches abroad, and brought such reproach upon the Protestant Religion in general, from the Enemies thereof; as if upon obscure notions of Faith and Fancy, it did admit the practice of Christian Duties and Obedience to be discountenanced and suspended, and introduce a Licence in Opinions and Manners, to the prejudice of the Christian Faith. And let Us all endeavour, and emulate each other in those endeavours, to countenance and advance the Protestant Religion abroad, which will be best done by supporting the Dignity and Reverence due to the best Reformed Protestant Church at home; and which being once freed from the Calumnies and Reproaches it hath undergone from these late ill times, will be the best shelter for those abroad, which will by that Countenance both be the better Protected against their Enemies, and be the more easily induced to compose the differences amongst themselves, which give their Enemies more advantage against them: And We hope and expect that all Men will henceforward forbear to vent any such Doctrine in the Pulpit, or to endeavour to work in such manner upon the Affections of the Peo-



People, as may dispose them to an ill Opinion of Us and the Government, and to disturb the Peace of the Kingdom. Which if all Men will in their several Vocations endeavour to preserve with the same Affection and Zeal We Our Self will do; all Our good Subjects will by Gods Blessing upon Us enjoy as great a measure of Felicity, as this Nation hath ever done, and which We shall constantly Labour to procure for them, as the greatest Blessing God can bestow upon Us in this World.

Given at our Court at *Whitehall* this  
Twenty fifth day of *October*. 1660.

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*The Reverend Dean of Pauls his Proposals or Terms of Union, betwixt the Church of England and the Dissenters: Taken out of his Preface to the Unreasonableness of Separation, Pag. 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94.*

**I**S there nothing to be done for Dissenting Protestants, who agree with us in all Doctrinal Articles of our Church, and only scruple the use of a few Ceremonies, and some late Impositions? Shall these Differences still be continued, when they may be so easily removed? and so many Useful Men be Encouraged, and taken into the Constitution? Do we value a few Indifferent Ceremonies, and some late Declarations, and doubtful Expressions, beyond the satisfaction of Mens Consciences, and the Peace and Stability of this Church?

*As to this material Question, I shall crave leave to deliver my Opinion freely and impartially; and that,*

*I. With respect to the Case of the People; the Terms of whose Union with us, is acknowledged by our Brethren to be so much easier than their own. But these are of two sorts:*

*I. Some allow the use of the Liturgy, but say they cannot joyn in Communion with us, because the participation of the Sacraments hath such Rites and Ceremonies annexed to it, which they think unlawful; and therefore till these be removed, or left indifferent, they dare not joyn with us in Baptism or the Lord's Supper; because in the one the Cross is used, and in the other Kneeling is required. As to these I answer,*

*(1.) Upon the most diligent Search I could make into these things, I find no good ground for any scruple of Conscience, as to the use of these Ceremonies; and as little as any as to the Sign of the Cross, as it is used in our Church; notwithstanding all the noise that hath been made about its being a New Sacrament, and I knew not what; but of this at large in the following Treatise.*



( 2. ) I see no ground for the Peoples Separation from other Acts of Communion, on the account of some Rites they suspect to be unlawful: And especially when the use of such Rites is none of their own Act, as the Cross in Baptism is not; and when such an Explication is annexed concerning the intention of Kneeling at the Lord's Supper, as is in the Rubrick after the Communion.

( 3. ) Notwithstanding, because the use of Sacraments in a Christian Church, ought to be the most free from all Exceptions, and they ought to be so Administred, as rather to invite than discourage scrupulous Persons from joyning in them: I do think it would be a part of Christian Wisdom and Condescension in the Governors of our Church, to remove those Bars from a freedom in joyning in full Communion with us. Which may be done, either by wholly taking away the Sign of the Cross; or if that may give offence to others, by confining the use of it to the publick Administration of Baptism; or by leaving it indifferent, as the Parents desire it. As to Kneeling at the Lord's Supper, since some Posture is necessary, and many Devout People scruple any other, and the Primitive Church did in Ancient times receive it in the Posture of Adoration, there is no reason to take this away, even in Parochial Churches; provided, that those who scruple Kneeling, do receive it with the least Offence to others, and rather Standing than Sitting, because the former is most agreeable to the practice of Antiquity, and of our Neighbour-Reformed Churches. As to the Surplice in Parochial Churches, it is not of that consequence as to bear a Dispute one way or other; and as to Cathedral Churches, there is no necessity of alteration. But there is another thing which seems to be of late much scrupled in Baptism, viz. The Use of God fathers and God-mothers. Excluding the Parents. Although I do not question, but the Practice of our Church may be justified, (as I have done it towards the end of the following Treatise;) yet I see no necessity of adhering so strictly to the Canon herein, but that a little alteration may prevent these Scruples, either by permitting the Parents to joyn with the Sponsors; or by the Parents publickly desiring the Sponsors to represent them in offering the Child to Baptism; or which seems most agreeable to Reason, that the Parents offer the Child to Baptism, and then the Sponsors perform the Covenanting part; representing the Child; and the Charge after Baptism be given in common to the Parents and Sponsors.

*These things being allowed, I see no obstruction remaining, as to a full Union of the Body of such Dissenters with us, in all Acts of Divine Worship, and Christian Communion, as do not reject all Communion with us as unlawful.*

2. But because there are many of those, who are become zealous Protestants, and plead much their Communion with us in Faith and Doctrine, although they cannot joyn with us in Worship, because they deny the Lawfulness of Liturgies, and the right Constitution of our Churches; *their case deserves some consideration, whether and how far they are capable of being made serviceable to the common Interest, and to the support of the Protestant Religion among us.*

*To their Case I answer,*

*First, That a general unlimited Toleration to Dissenting Protestants, will soon bring Confusion among us, and in the end Popery, as I have shewed already; and a Suspension of all the Penal Laws that relate to Dissenters is the same thing with a boundless Toleration.*

*Secondly, If any present Favours be granted to such, in consideration of our Circumstances, and to prevent their Conjunction with the Papists, for a general Toleration, (for if ever the Papists obtain it, it must be under their Name :) If, I say, such Favour be thought fit to be shewed them, it ought to be with such Restrictions and Limitations as may prevent the Mischief which may easily follow upon it: For all such Meetings are a perpetual Reproach to our Churches, by their declaring, That our Churches are no true Churches; that our manner of Worship is unlawful; and that our Church-Government is Antichristian; and that on these accounts they separate from us, and Worship God by themselves. But if such an Indulgence be thought fit to be granted, I humbly offer these things to Consideration.*

1. *That none be permitted to enjoy the privilege of it, who do not declare, That they do hold Communion with our Churches to be Unlawful. For it seems unreasonable to allow it to others, and will give Countenance to endless and causeless Separations.*

2. *That all who enjoy it, besides taking the Test against Popery, do subscribe the Thirty Six Articles of our Faith, because the pretence of this Liberty, is joyning with us in Points of Faith; and this may more probably prevent Papists getting in amongst them.*

3. That all such as enjoy it, must declare the particular Congregations they are of and enter their Names before such Commissioners as shall be Authorized for that purpose; that so this may be no pretence for Idle, Loose, and Prophane Persons, never going to any Church at all.

4. That both Preachers and Congregations be liable to severe Penalties, if they use any bitter or reproachful words, either in Sermons or Writings, against the Established Constitution of our Churches; because they desire only the freedom of their own Consciences; and the using this Liberty, will discover it is not Conscience, but a turbulent, factious Humour, which makes them separate from our Communion.

5. That all Indulged Persons be particularly obliged to pay all legal Duties to the Parochial Churches, ( lest meer Covetousness tempt Men to run among them ) and no Persons so Indulged, be capable of any Publick Office. It not being reasonable that such should be trusted with Government, who look upon the Worship established by Law as Unlawful.

6. That no other Penalty be laid on such indulged Persons, but that of Twelve Pence a Sunday for their absence from their Parochial Churches, which ought to be duly Collected for the Use of the Poor, and cannot be complained of as any heavy Burthen, considering the Liberty they do enjoy by it.

7. That the Bishops, as Visitors appointed by Law, have an exact Account given to them, of the Rule of their Worship and Discipline, and of all the Persons belonging to the indulged Congregations, with their Qualities and Places of Abode; and that none be admitted a Member of any such Congregation without acquainting their Visitor with it, that so means may be used to prevent their leaving our Communion, by giving satisfaction to their scruples. This Power of the Bishops cannot be scripted by them, since herein they are considered as Commissioners appointed by Law.

8. That no indulged Persons presume under severe Penalties to breed up Scholars, or to teach Gentlemens Sons University Learning; because this may be justly looked on as a design to propagate Schism to Posterity, and to lay a Foundation for the disturbance of future Generations.

II. As to the Case of the ejected Ministers, I have these things to offer :

1. That bare Subscription of the Thirty six Articles concerning Doctrinal Points, be not allowed as sufficient to qualifie any Man  
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for a Living, or any Church-preferment, for these Reasons.

First, Any Lay-man upon these Terms may not only be capable of a Living, but may take upon him to Administer the Sacraments; which was never allowed in any well-constituted Church in the Christian World. And such an allowance among us, instead of settling and uniting us, will immediately bring things into great confusion, and give mighty Advantage to the Papists against our Church. And we have reason to fear, a Design of this Nature, under a pretence of Union of Protestants, tends to the Subversion of this Church, and throwing all things into confusion, which at last will end in Popery.

Secondly, This will bring a Faction into the Church, which will more endanger it than External Opposition. For such Men will come in Triumphantly, having beaten down Three of the Thirty Nine Articles; and being in Legal Possession of their Places, will be ready to despise and contemn those who submitted to the rest, and to glory in their Conquests, and draw followers after them, as the Victorious Confessors against Prelacy and Ceremonies. And can they imagine those of the Church of England will see the Reputation of the Church, or their own, to suffer so much, and not appear in their own Vindication? Things are not come to that pass, nor will they suddenly be, that the Friends of the Church of England will be either afraid, or ashamed to own her Cause, We do heartily and sincerely desire Union with our Brethren, if it may be had on just and reasonable Terms; but they must not think, that we will give up the Cause of the Church for it, so as to condemn its Constitution, or make the Ceremonies unlawful, which have been hitherto observed and practised in it. If any Expedient can be found out for the ease of other Mens Consciences, without reflecting on our own; if they can be taken in, without reproach or dishonour to the Reformation of the Church; I hope no true Son of the Church of England will oppose it. But if the Design be to bring them in as a Faction to bridle and controul the Episcopal Power, by setting up forty Bishops in a Diocese against one; if it be for them to trample upon the Church of England, and not to submit to its Order and Government upon fair and moderate terms, let them not call this a Design of Union, but the giving Law to a Party to oppose the Church of England. And what the success of this will be, let wise Men judge.

Thirdly, If a Subscription to Thirty Six Articles were sufficient by the Statute 13 Eliz. c. 12. I do not understand how by

virtue

Co. Inst. 4.

Part 323, 324.

*virtue of that Statute a Man is bound publickly to read the Thirty nine Articles in the Church, and the Testimonial of his Subscription, on pain of being deprived ipso facto, if he do not.* For the L. Ch. J. Coke saith, That Subscription to the 39 Articles is required by force of the Act of Parliament, 13 Eliz. c. 12. And he adds, That the Delinquent is disabled and deprived ipso facto; and that a conditional Subscription to them was not sufficient, was resolved by all the Judges in England. But how a Man should be deprived ipso facto for not Subscribing, and Reading the 39 Articles, as appears by the Cases mentioned in Coke, and yet be required only to subscribe to 36, by the same Statute, is a thing too hard for me to conceive.

2. But notwithstanding this, if any temper can be found out, as to the manner of Subscription, that may give ease to the scruples of our Brethren, and secure the Peace of the Church, the desired Union may be attained without that apparent danger of increasing the Factions among us.

And this I suppose may be done, by an absolute Subscription to all those Articles which concern the Doctrine of the true Christian Faith, and the Use of the Sacraments; and a solemn Promise under their hand, or Subscription of Peaceable Submission, as to the rest, so as not to oppose or contradict them, either in Preaching or Writing; upon the same Penalty as if they had not subscribed to the 36. Which may be a more probable means to keep the Church in quiet, than forcing a more rigorous Subscription upon them, or leaving them at their full liberty.

3. As to the other Subscription required, 1 Jac. to the 3 Articles. The first is provided for by the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. The Third is the same with the Subscription to the 39 Articles. And as to the second, about the Book of Common-Prayer, &c. It ought to be considered,

(1.) Whether, for the satisfaction of the scrupulous, some more doubtful and obscure passages may not yet be explained or amended? Whether the New Translation of the Psalms were not fitter to be used, at least in Parochial Churches? Whether portions of Canonical Scripture were not better put in stead of Apocrypha Lessons? Whether the Rubrick about Salvation of Infants, might not be restored to its former place, in the Office of Confirmation, and so the present exceptions against it be removed? Whether those expressions which suppose the strict exercise of Discipline, in Burying the Dead, were not better left at liberty in our present Case?

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*Such a Review made by Wise and Peaceable Men, not given to Wrath and Disputing, may be so far from being a dishonour to this Church, that it may add to the Glory of it.*

(2.) *Upon such a Review, whether it be not great reason that all Persons who Officiate in the Church, be not only tied to a constant Use of it in all publick Offices, (as often as they administer them) which they ought in Person frequently to do; but to declare at their first entrance upon a Parochial Charge, their approbation of the Use of it, after their own Reading of it, that so the People may not suspect them to carry on a factious Design, under an outward pretence of Conformity to the Rules of the Church they live in.*

(3.) *Whether such a solemn Using the Liturgy, and approbation and promise of the Use of it, may not be sufficient, in stead of the late Form of declaring their Assent and Consent, which hath been so much scrupled by our Brethren?*

*These are all the things which appear to me reasonable to be allowed in order to an Union, and which I suppose may be granted without detriment or dishonour to our Church. There are other things very desirable towards the happiness and flourishing of this Church; as the exercise of Discipline in Parochial Churches, in a due subordination to the Bishop; the Reforming the Ecclesiastical Courts as to Excommunication, without prejudice to the excellent Profession of the Civil Law; the Building of more Churches in great Parishes, especially about the City of London; the retrenching Pluralities; the strictness and solemnity of Ordinations; the making a Book of Canons suitable to this Age, for the better Regulating the Conversations of the Clergy. Such things as these, might facilitate our Union, and make our Church in sight of all its Enemies become a Praise in the whole Earth.*

*A Specimen of a Bill, for Uniting Protestants; being a rough Draught of such Terms, as seem equal for the Conformist to grant, and the Non-conformist to yield to, for Peace sake; Provided a good while, and Published on purpose only for the farther, better, and more easie Consideration of the Parliament.*

**W**Hereas, there are many Jealousies risen about Popery, which makes it even necessary to the peace of the Nation, that the Protestant Interest be united and strengthened by all Good and Lawful Means: And to this end, there being this one proper Expedient; to wit; The removing the Occasion of Divisions, which several persons do find to themselves in those late Injunctions, which yet were intended to the same purpose of Concord in the Nation: Be it Enacted  
 ————— That an Explanation of these Impositions, and such Allegiations, be allowed to the tenderly Considerate, and peaceably Scrupulous, as follow.

In the Act of Uniformity, By the Declaration of Assent and Consent to all things, and every Thing contained in, and prescribed by the two Books of Common Prayer, and of Ordering Priests and Deacons, we understand not, that these Books are in every Minute particular, infallible, or free from that Defect, which is incident to all Human Composure: But that they are in the main Contents, to be sincerely approved and used: And we do therefore allow this Declaration to be sufficient, if it be made to the use of the Book, in the Ordinary Constant Lords-Days-Service, notwithstanding any Exceptions some may have against some Things in the By-Offices, and Occasional Service, the Rubrick, and otherwise. And for the Ceremonies which are made, and have been always, and on all hands, held to be only indifferent Things, we think fit that they be left to the Consciences and prudence of Ministers, and People, every where (excepting the Cathedrals) to use them, or forbear them, as they judge it most meet for their own and others Edification, provided that if any person will have his Child Baptized with the Sign of the Cross, or stand upon any thing



thing else, hitherto required by the Service-Book, if the Minister himself scruple the performance, he shall permit another to do it.

In the same *Act*, By those Words in the *Subscription*, that *It is not lawful to take Arms against the King, upon any Pretence whatsoever*; we intend no new or strange Thing, but the Rightful Maintenance only of the King's Authority against Rebellion, according to the common determination of Learned Writers, in the Case of Subjection to Princes. By the Words, *I abhor the Position of taking Arms by the Authority of the King, against any Commissioned by Him*, we never thought of advancing the Arbitrary Commissions of the King above Law; but by those *Commissioned by Him*, we understand such as are Legally Commissioned, and in the Legal pursuit of such Commissions. By the Clause which follows, that requires a Renunciation of all *Endeavour of any Alteration of Government in the Church or State*, we never meant to deny any Free-born Subject his Right, of Choosing *Parliament-Men*, or Acting in his place for the Common Good any way, according to Law; but that he shall Renounce all such *Endeavour*, as is Seditious, or not warranted by the Constitution of the Nation; and particularly; such an *Endeavour* as was Assumed in the late Times, without, and against the Consent of the King: And for the rest of the *Subscription*, which is enjoyed but to the Year 1682. Be it Enacted, that it cease presently, and be no longer enjoyed.

And forasmuch as there is an Oath prescribed and required of all *Non-conformists* Preachers, that reside in any Corporate Town, by a certain Act of the former *Parliament*, made at Oxford in the 17th. Year of His now Majesties Reign, entitled, *An Act for restraining Non-conformists, from inhabiting Corporations*: We do further declare, That it shall suffice any Man, for the Enjoyment of his Free born Liberty, of Inhabiting where he thinks best; and serve him also instead of the fore-mentioned *Subscription*; to take that Oath in this form of Words following. *I A. B. do swear, That I hold it unlawful upon any pretence, to take Arms against the King, His Government or Laws: And that I disclaim that dangerous Position, of taking Arms by his Authority, against his Person, or any Legally Commissioned by him, in the Legal pursuit of such Commissions: And that I will not endeavour any Alteration of Go-*

vernment in the Church or State, in any way or manner not warranted by the Constitution of the Kingdom, or any otherwise than by Act of Parliament: And as soon as any Man has taken the Oath thus, he shall be discharged of all penalty for his omission before.

We do Declare moreover, That whereas it is required also in the *Act of Uniformity*, that every Minister who enjoys any Living or Ecclesiastical preferment, shall be Ordained by a Bishop; and there are several persons of late, who in case of Necessity, for want of Bishops took *Presbyterian-Orders*: Our meaning is not in any wise to disgust the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas, and make it necessary for such to be Re-ordained to the Office; but that they receive this Second imposition of Hands to the Exercise of their Office in the new charge, unto which they are, or shall be called; and that the Bishop shall frame his words accordingly.

And whereas there is a Subscription also in the *Canons*, and the *Canonical-Oath of Obedience*, imposed on most Ministers by the Bishops, that have given some of the greatest Occasion to *Non-conformity* heretofore; which yet never passed into Law by any Act of Parliament: We do further Declare, That nothing more of that kind shall be required of Ministers henceforward, than was made and held necessary by the Act of the *Thirteenth of Elizabeth*.

And in regard there hath been great Offence taken by Conscientious Ministers, at the Bishops, (or their Courts) commanding them to read the Sentence of Excommunication against some or other of their Parish, for such faults as they think not at all worthy of so great a Censure: We declare it but a just Thing, that every Minister be first satisfied in the Cause, or else be exempted from the Execution of that Charge; and that the Bishop (or his Court) provide some other person that is satisfied about it, to do it.

And to the intent that a free search after Truth may not be discouraged in the pursuit of Concord, and many other Scruples avoided upon that Account: We declare, that though an *Authentick* Interpretation be required, as to the Substance of all Laws, yet in the Articles of the Church, (which are *Theses* for Agreement, and not Laws) and the *Homilies*, a *Doctrinal* Interpretation shall be held sufficient for an *Assent* or *Subscription* to them.

And

And because the very Superintendency of Bishops, and that Subjection to them which is required by the Constitution of the Realm, is, or may be an hindrance to many sober Ministers, and other Protestants, of coming into the Church, who are ready to consent to the Doctrine, but not to the Discipline or Government of it: We do declare, That so long as any Person or Party do acknowledge the King's Supremacy, as Head of the Church in this Nation, and obey their Ordinary, or the Bishops, in *Licetis & Honestis*, upon the account of his Authority, ( committed to them for the Exercise of that External Regiment, *Circa Sacra*, which is granted by all our Divines to the Higher Powers in every Nation ) it is enough for the owning *Episcopal Jurisdiction* ( so far as they do own it, in the Declaration of *Assent* and *Consent*, or in any other part of *Conformity* ; ) and shall serve them to all intents and purposes in Law, no less than a professed belief and acknowledgment of the Immediate Divine Right of it.

Be it therefore Enacted by this present Parliament, That if any Person be willing to Conform to the present Establishment of the Church of England, and her Service appointed according to these Explanations, Alleviations, Declarations, Lenitives, or Cautions, he shall be admitted to any Ecclesiastical preferment, and enjoy the use of his Ministry without any molestation: All Statutes, Canons, or Laws to the contrary notwithstanding.

And for the making this Act of better Signification to the Concerned, and the prevention of that Scandal which is raised on the Clergy, through the Covetousness of some, in heaping up to themselves all the Preferments they can get, when others have scarce Subsistence for their Families, and the Souls of many People are thereby neglected: Be it farther Enacted, that no Clergy-men for the three next years ensuing, be suffered to enjoy any more than one Living or Cure of Souls, and one Dignity, ( or other Ecclesiastical Preferment ) at one time; and that every Man ( without Exception ) that hath more than One of Either, shall immediately give up the Rest to be distributed among those who shall be brought off from their *Non conformity*, upon the Terms of this Act, into the Established Order. Which that they may also be obtained, and possessed with a clean Conscience, and that grievous Corruption of *Simony* may

may be Extirpate out of the Land: Be it Enacted moreover, that every Patron that shall henceforward present his Clerk to any Living, shall have the Oath, called *The Simonical Oath*, imposed on him, no less than on the Incumbent: And if he refuses to take it, that then the Bishop shall have immediate Power (taking only the same Oath) of Presentation in his Room.

And forasmuch, as there are some Ministers of a good Life, that cannot (according to their Judgments) allow of our Parochial Churches, nor a Book of *Liturgie*: But do choose to Worship God, and Jesus Christ in the way of their gathered or separate Congregations, and crave the Protection and Clemency of the King, upon their Allegiance, as other Subjects: Be it finally Enacted, for the happiness and quiet of the Realm, and the Reduction of these Men by other means than those which have hitherto proved unsuccessful; That every Christian Subject throughout the Land, that profess the Reformed Religion, and be not Convict of *Popery*, be Pardoned all Faults and Penalties, incurred upon the account of any Fore-passed *Non-conformity*; and that they shall not, during these Seven Years next ensuing, be Prosecuted upon any Penal Law, for their Consciences, in the matter of Religion; They carrying themselves Innocently and Peaceably, with submission to the Civil, and without disturbance to the Ecclesiastical Government, now settled in the Nation: All Statutes to the contrary notwithstanding.

*In Short,*

A Repeal of our Laws about *Conformity* unto the 13th of *Elizabeth*; Or, a New *Act of Uniformity*; Or, The King's Declaration concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs, at his first coming in, turn'd into a Law, were *Comprehension*.

His latter Declaration to all his Loving Subjects, (some few things in both, yet a little considered) made so, were *Indulgence*.

A Bill of *Comprehensions*, with *Indulgence*, both together, will do our Business. An Addition, or Clause in it against *Pluralities*, will do it with *Supererogation*.

*Deo Gloria.*